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THE FUTURE OF THE RESERVE COMPONENT (RC)  
SPECIAL FORCES (SF) INDIVIDUAL TRAINING PROGRAM

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL(P) JAMES D. MOORE

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**THE FUTURE OF THE RESERVE COMPONENT (RC)  
SPECIAL FORCES (SF) INDIVIDUAL TRAINING PROGRAM**

**AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT**

by

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# ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: James D. Moore, LTC (P), SF

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This study reviews the historical and evolutionary development of the Reserve Component (RC) Special Forces (SF) Individual Training Program. It provides a narrative account of each regulation pertaining to RC SF programs as it was developed and examines the changes to the program implemented by each succeeding revision. The study concludes that the objectives of the program have not been achieved in spite of numerous revisions to the regulations. The study also addresses the question of whether the RC SF community, in conjunction with the Special Warfare Center, can accept the elimination of the RC phased training program. Finally the study concludes that the RC should concentrate on the active component method of individual qualification and recommends that the phased program be terminated. The basic thrust is to emphasize the recruiting aspect of the recruiting, training and retaining cycle. The elimination of the phased program will result in immediate improvements in the quality of RC SF forces and improved recruiting efforts will result in quantity improvements in the long run.



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THE FUTURE OF THE RESERVE COMPONENT (RC)  
SPECIAL FORCES (SF) INDIVIDUAL TRAINING PROGRAM

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The history of the Reserve Component Special Forces Qualification Course (RCSFQC) has met with dubious success since its inception in the 1960's. Designed to provide an alternative method for reserve officers and enlisted men becoming qualified as Special Forces (SF) soldiers, the course has undergone many and varied changes during its lifetime.

With the emphasis placed on unconventional warfare by the late President John F. Kennedy, Special Forces soon began a force structure buildup of unprecedented proportions. Through the past decades this buildup was largely cyclical with SF enjoying the ups and downs similar to other types of units. Currently, SF is operating on the high side of the cycle. The Reserve Components (RC) soon integrated Special Forces groups into their force structure and quickly acquired a need for getting RC personnel Special Forces qualified.

Unfortunately, the nature of the reserve soldier did not readily adapt to training periods longer than two weeks. Thus, the thirteen week and up qualification courses were out of the realm of possibility for many soldiers who eventually

were lost to Special Forces.

To counter this problem, a concept of phased training was developed whereby a reservist could, in two week active duty training phases over a period of several years and complementing the active duty phases with correspondence courses, become Special Forces qualified. In essence the army was getting a highly trained reserve soldier and the reservist was able to continue his civilian occupation and life.

What will follow is an in-depth examination of the history and evolution of this concept and program beginning in 1966. Needless to say, this program has not produced the desired or anticipated results. The reasons for the lack of success will become apparent and recommendations will be made as to alternative solutions.

## CHAPTER II

### RCSFQC - THE SIXTIES

In 1966, United States Continental Army Command published Con Reg 350-1.<sup>1</sup> Annex AD to this regulation addressed Reserve Component Special Forces, Training and Appendix I dealt with Reserve Component Special Forces (RC SF) Military Occupation Specialty (MOS) qualification. Under provisions of this regulation, requirements for officer personnel to become Special Forces qualified were successful completion of the Unconventional Warfare (UW) Course, U.S. Army Special Warfare School (resident), or successful completion of the UW Course, US Army Special Warfare School (non-resident) and participation in two RC SF Annual Active Duty for Training/Annual Field Training (ANACDUTRA/AFT) field training exercises (FTX) or one active component (AC) SF FTX.<sup>2</sup> After completion of the latter, the officer would be recommended for award of the prefix "3" by his unit commander and the SF qualified active duty advisor. Of particular note is the fact that the UW course (non-resident) was taken by correspondence.

Enlisted personnel underwent a somewhat more extensive training program. Of course, once selected, they too could opt for the AC resident courses. However, if they opted for

the phased method, all personnel, with the exception of medical personnel, could, once selected, receive basic instruction in one of three ways: local unit instruction with Program of Instruction (POI) assistance from Special Forces training Group at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, resident instruction at Fort Bragg or by instruction from a Mobile Training Team (MTT) from Fort Bragg. This phase was followed by tactics and techniques training which was accomplished in one of two ways: successfully completing three Special Forces FTXs during ANACDUTRA/AFT or attending a four week resident course at Fort Bragg. Personnel were given three years to complete the training which culminated in the award of the suffix "S". Medical training was, by nature of the training, longer because of the requirement for more resident training. Following Phase I, which could be taken by correspondence, were Phases II and III; resident courses of seven weeks duration each.

This then was the manner in which RC officers and enlisted personnel became Special Forces qualified in the late 1960s. Even at this time, there was a scarcity of active duty resident training and a disparity in the level of expertise was evident when the two methods were contrasted. The October, 1966 edition of Con Reg 350-1 was superseded by the 15 November 1971 edition.<sup>3</sup> RC SF training was now brought into the 1970s.



## CHAPTER II

### ENDNOTES

1. CON Reg 350-1, Annex AD, Appendix I, Reserve Component Special Forces (RCSF) MOS Qualification, 18 October 1966.
2. Ibid., p. 7.
3. CON Reg 350-1, Annex AD, Appendix I, Reserve Component Special Forces (RCSF) MOS Qualification, 15 November 1971.

### CHAPTER III

#### RCSFQC - THE SEVENTIES

By 1971, the John F. Kennedy Center for Special Warfare had been renamed the John F. Kennedy Institute for Military Assistance (USAIMA). In the revision of the Con Rcg 350-1, officer requirements had changed little. Requirements still included the active duty resident option or completion of the Special Forces Officer Correspondence Course, USAIMA and not only successful participation in two RC SF Annual Training (AT) FTXs but participation had to be as a member of an operational detachment. This prevented officers from fulfilling the requirement by serving as a staff officer on a "B" or "C" detachment.

Medical training prerequisites were increased to include the completion of the 91A10 training of ten weeks at the U.S. Army Medical Training Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. This was followed by completion of the two phased option. Phase I (academic) of the course was provided by non-resident instruction obtained from the Medical Field Service School, Fort Sam Houston.<sup>1</sup> The instruction was designed to be administered by the unit training officers with technical support provided by government or civilian medical installations. Phase II was a seven week on-the-job

training course provided on resident basis by those U.S. Army hospitals participating in the current Army Medical Service (AMEDS) applicatory training program.<sup>2</sup> Medical training, therefore, was the only training that saw an increase in resident instruction under this revision.

In 1972, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) replaced Continental Army Command as the training proponent of the army. In August 1973 TRADOC Supplement 1 to AR 350-1 was published.<sup>3</sup> Annex G dealt with RC Special Forces qualification. Options for officers remained the same.

Things became more complicated for the enlisted man however, with the addition of the "Hard skill"/"Soft skill" MOS differentiations. Hard skills were those MOS, which were found on an H-series, Table of Organization and Equipment (TOE) operational detachment; e.g., 05B, 11B/C/F, 12A or 91A. Hard skill MOSs had a sixteen week resident SFQC, Soft skills were those MOSs found on an H-series TOE which required a suffix "S" and did not include the hard skill MOSs included on the operational detachment previously mentioned.<sup>4</sup> Soft skill MOSs had a thirteen week resident SFQC.

The RC SFQC for hard skill MOSs required successful completion of SFQC Phases I and II in residence at Fort Bragg, a total of ten weeks. Phase III was completed through a non resident option by completing the Special Forces Operations Correspondence Course plus on-site individual training requirements stipulated by RC SF group commanders.<sup>5</sup>

Soft skill MOS requirements were the same with one

exception. Phase II was not required. Accordingly, a soft skill MOS suffix "S" was not transferable to a hard skill MOS. Medical personnel still required the additional training associated with their field.

In May 1974, TRACOC Reg 135-5 was published. This regulation superseded Annex G, RC SFQ, TRADOC Suppl 1 to AR 350-1.<sup>6</sup> This regulation produced several substantial changes over the previous regulation. However, none of the changes affected officer qualification. They still had the option of completing the renamed 13-week Special Forces Officer Course (SFOC) at Fort Bragg or, as an alternative, successfully completing the nonresident Phase III of the RCSFQC and satisfactory participation in a ten day evaluated UW FTX. See Figure 1.

For the first time MOS 11F, the senior NCOs, were qualified in a manner different from other NCOs. If not previously Special Forces qualified, the NCO holding an 11F MOS could qualify in an identical manner to officer personnel with one exception. The senior NCO could qualify by attending the resident SFQC Phase III at Fort Bragg.

The enlisted RCSFQC saw the most changes under the new regulation. The course became a true multi-phased, multi-tracked nonresident/resident training program designed to provide the RC SF group commander with the means to qualify RC SF enlisted personnel for award of Skill Qualification Indicator (SQI) "S" to MOS 05B, 11B/C and 12B.<sup>7</sup> Figure 1 illustrates the RCSFQC phases.

<u>PHASE</u>	<u>CONTENT</u>	<u>METHOD</u>	<u>LENGTH</u>
IA	Basic and Leadership Training	Correspondence	78 credit hrs
IB	Basic and Leadership Training	Resident	2 wk AT
IIA	Specialized Training	Correspondence	05B:55 cr hrs 11B/C: 117 cr hrs 12B: 116 cr hrs
IIB	Specialized Training	Resident	2 wk AT
III	Special Forces Operations Correspondence course	Correspondence	134 cr hrs

Figure 1.®

Phases IA, IB and III were common skills and tasks applicable to all MOSs as listed above. Phase IIA and IIB were unique to each particular MOS. The culmination of the course was satisfactory participation in a ten day UW FTX during which the performance of the soldier was evaluated by qualified SF personnel. The course was designed to include four weeks of resident training at Fort Bragg, a two week AT FTX and from 267 to 329 credit hours of correspondence studies.

The flexibility of this course is illustrated by the

number of options available to the soldier. Students could have completed all correspondence phases at one time prior to taking the first resident phase e.g., Phases IA, IIA and III prior to Phase IB, or they may have taken them sequentially e.g. Phases IA, IB, IIA, IIB and III. They had the option of substituting resident SFQC Phases I, II or III for like nonresident/resident RCSFQC, e.g., resident SFQC Phase I substituted for nonresident/ resident RCSFQC Phases IA and IB. Further, if the soldier had completed all his correspondence up front, he then was free to take Phases IB and IIB back to back. The opportunity was there for the reserve soldier to start and complete RCSFQC in one year. By doing the correspondence course work first and by completing the resident phases back to back, the soldier was then free to complete his AT UW FTX that same year and be awarded SQI "S". By doing it this way, the soldier was away from his civilian job for six weeks as opposed to 16 weeks with the resident SFQC. If his schedule still did not allow for this much absence, the soldier could spread out his SF qualification over a 45 month period from the date he was sworn in.

RCSFQC for medical personnel became more and more similar to the resident SFQC, again because of the dictates of the training. Figure 2 outlines the courses and phases through which the aspiring Special Forces aidmen had to proceed. Prior service enlisted men did not have to repeat the first three steps if already completed.

<u>STEP</u>	<u>COURSE/PHASE AND LOCATION</u>	<u>LENGTH</u>
A	BCT	8 wks
B	AIT, 91A, Ft. Sam Houston, Tx.	9 wks
C	Airborne training, Ft. Benning, Ga.	3 wks
D	SFQC, Phase I, USAIMA	4 wks
E	SF Medical Aidman Course, 300 FI, Ft. Sam Houston, Tx, and selected CONUS hospitals	19 wks
F	SFQC, Phase II, USIMA	6 wks
G	SFQC, Phase III, USAIMA	<u>4 wks</u>
		53 weeks

Figure 2.®

This still meant that they had 33 weeks of resident training plus a final ten day graded FTX to complete prior to the award of SQI"S". These personnel also had the opportunity to substitute RCSFQC Phases IA, IB and III for SFQC Phases I and III respectively.

This was the last substantive change made to the RCSFQC in the decade. The RC SF community felt that TRADOC and USAIMA had produced a training vehicle that would systematically and methodically increase the individual Special Forces qualification percentage of the RC SF units. The resident option was available and several variations of the non resident/resident option were available. A flexible

timetable was available. Yet the SF qualifications did not improve. In fact they barely held their own. Complicating the matter was the implication the RCSFQC was not turning out the quality product that SFQC was turning out. Not only was the AC SF soldier questioning the ability of the RC SF soldier, but the reserve soldier who had completed resident SFQC was also questioning the ability of his fellow RC soldiers who were deemed fully qualified via RCSFC route. In some cases, this was perhaps justifiably so. In many cases an officer who had completed 13 weeks resident training at Fort Bragg was out performing an officer who had completed a correspondence course and a FTX, though both were considered fully SF qualified. These feelings or thoughts carried over into the enlisted ranks as well. Still this method of producing SF qualified RC soldiers carried through the seventies and into the eighties.



## CHAPTER III

### ENDNOTES

1. CON Reg 350-1, Annex AD, Appendix 1, Reserve Component Special Forces (RCSF), MOS Qualification, 15 November 1971, p. 6.
2. Ibid., p. 6.
3. TRADOC Suppl 1 to AR 350-1, Annex G, Reserve Component Special Forces Qualification, 1 August 1973.
4. Ibid., pp. 2-3.
5. Ibid., p. 3.
6. TRADOC Reg 135-5, Reserve Component Special Forces Qualification, 10 May 1974.
7. Ibid., pp. 2-4.
8. Ibid., p. 3.
9. Ibid., p. 5.

## CHAPTER IV

### RCSFQC - THE EIGHTIES

In 1981, TRADOC published their first new TRADOC Reg 135-5 in over 7 years.<sup>1</sup> By this time, addition skill identifier (ASI) "5G" had replaced the old prefix "3". The primary method for officers Special Forces qualification was still the successful completion of the 13-week Special Forces Officer Course conducted at Fort Bragg. However, for the first time, RC SFQC for officers had substantially changed. See Figure 3. The officer had to successfully complete Phase IA or IC. Phase IA was Special Forces Basic and Leadership correspondence subcourses while Phase IC was Special Forces Basic and Leadership unit training. Then the officer had to complete IIIA, the Special Forces Operations Army correspondence course. Next, in a dramatic change, the officer had to attend and successfully complete a two week resident Special Forces Officer training course either at Fort Bragg or exported to another location. This course, which was designed to teach the officer SF skills, was the first resident course offered to and required of the officer in RCSFQC. See Figure 4. The shortcomings encountered by too little resident SF training for officers in RCSFQC was finally being realized and this two week course was the first

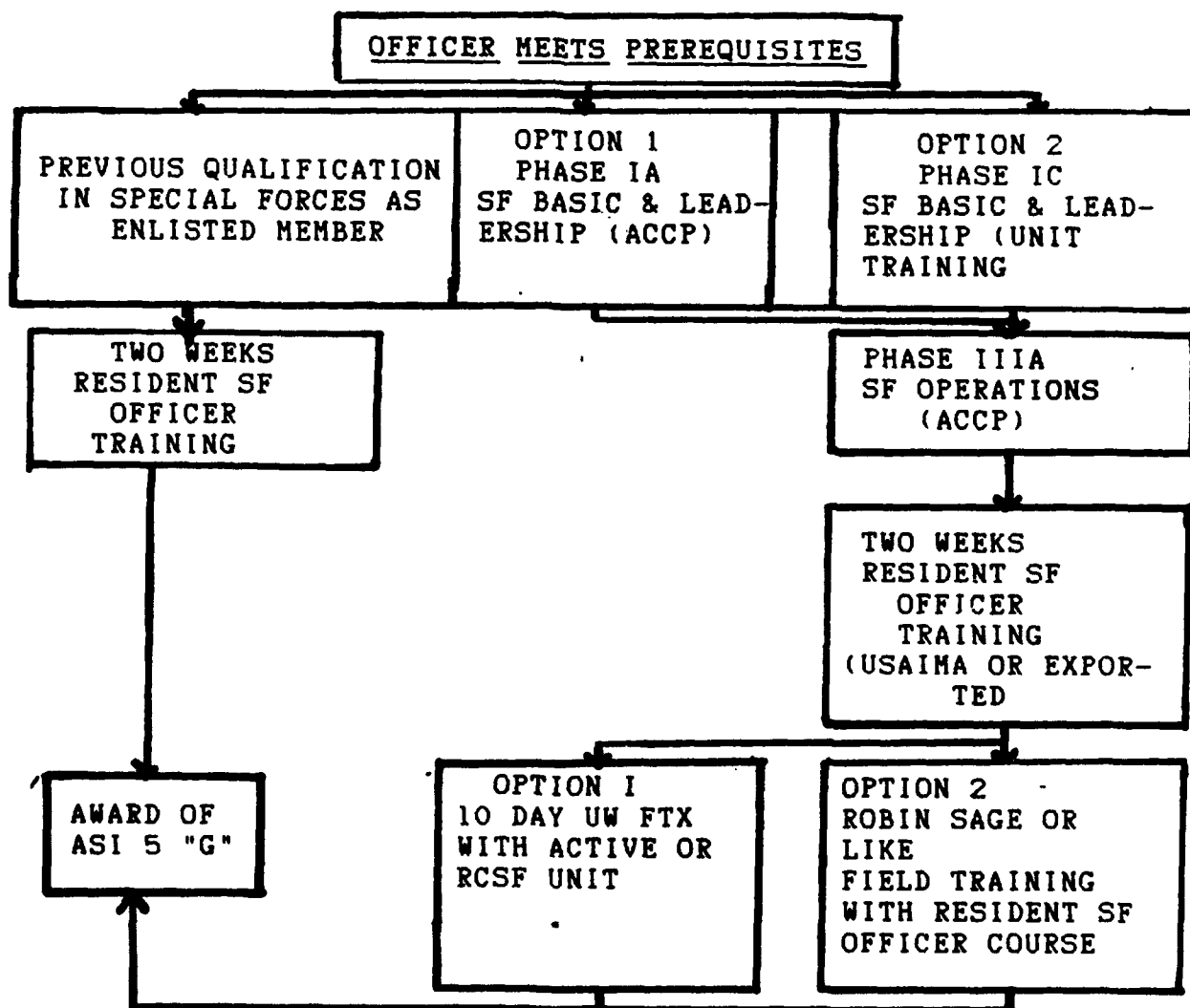


Figure 3.2

SPECIAL FORCES OFFICERS COURSE  
RESERVE COMPONENTS

**SUBJECTS**

Physical Fitness Qualification Test  
Swim Test  
Introduction to the SFOC/RC  
US Organization for Unconventional Warfare  
Special Forces Operational Base  
Introduction to Resistance  
Recruitment, Organization, and Development of Guerrilla Force  
The Auxiliary  
The Underground  
Resistance Force Training  
Guerrilla Force Combat Operations  
Guerrilla Chief Relations  
Guerrilla Security Operations  
Introduction to Intelligence  
Operational Area Intelligence  
Area Assessment  
Area Study  
Caching  
Isolation & Briefback Responsibilities  
Escape and Evasion  
UW OP Order  
Planning DZ/LZ Resupply Operations  
PRC 74  
UW Communication  
Crypto  
Emergency Medical Treatment  
Expedient River Crossing  
Map Review  
Patrolling Exercise  
LZ/DZ Exercise  
FTX  
Land Navigation Day  
Land Navigation Night  
Diagnostic Map Examination  
Final Examination

Figure 4.3

step in rectifying this problem. Finally, the officer had two options from which to choose for the FTX. He could take part in a ten day UW FTX with either an RC SF or an AC SF unit or he could participate in exercise "ROBIN SAGE" with a resident SFOC at Fort Bragg. More importantly the officer now received a minimum of four weeks resident training instead of two weeks.

Substantial changes were made to the enlisted program as well. Essentially, the soldier had to complete three phases. See Figure 5. Each phase had multiple options available to the soldier. Phase I included basic SF skills equally applicable to all MOSs. Phase II was MOS unique skills and Phase III brought the soldiers back together in an FTX environment. Each phase for each MOS, with the exception of the medical MOS, had a resident part and a nonresident correspondence part or unit training part. Therefore, the enlisted soldier had a minimum of 6 weeks resident training including the course culminating in FTX. For medical personnel, there was no nonresident instruction during Phase II. The RCSFQC Phase II was identical to SFQC Phase II. A review of Figure 5 reveals the variety of paths that the enlisted soldier could follow in order to become SF qualified. In fact, there were so many options that the entire process was becoming self defeating. For example, if a RC SF Group had 75 personnel in various stages of qualification, they might break down to a readily trainable 25 personnel per phase. But with the wide variety of

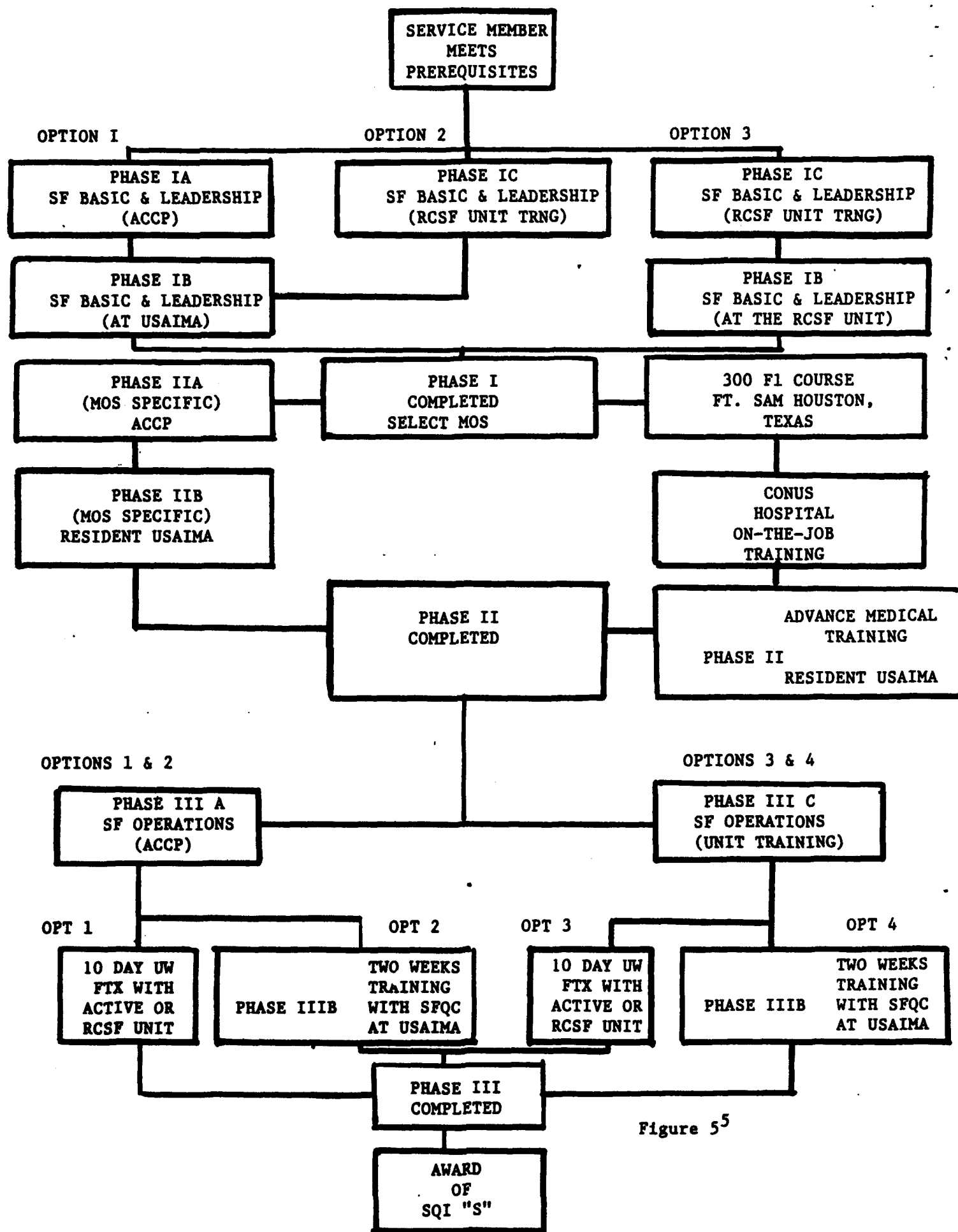


Figure 5<sup>5</sup>

options, a particular option of a particular phase might result in less than 5 soldiers to train; hardly an efficient management of training time and resources.

A quick break down of what each phase/option entails is as follows:

Phase IA - SF Basic and Leadership - 64 credit hrs of correspondence subcourses.

Phase IB - SF Basic and Leadership - 2 wk resident course at Fort Bragg or export location.

Phase IC - SF Basic and Leadership - conducted by RC SF units during IDT utilizing material provided by USAIMA and RC SF instructors trained by USAIMA.

Phase IIA - SF Weapon Leader (11B and 11C) - 113 cr hrs of correspondence subcourses.

- SF Engineer (12B) - 85 cr hrs of correspondence subcourses.

- SF Radio Operator (05B and 31V) - 56 cr hrs of correspondence subcourses.

Phase IIB - SF MOS Training (11B/C, 12B, 05B/31V) - 2 wk resident course at Fort Bragg.

Phase IIIA - SF Operations - 102 cr hrs of correspondence subcourses.

Phase IIIB - SF Operations - 2 wk resident course at Fort Bragg conducted during SFQC Phase III FTX.

Phase IIIC - SF Operations - Conducted by RC SF units during IDT periods utilizing materials provided by

USAIMA and RC SF instructors trained by USAIMA.

Again, like phases of resident SFQC could be substituted for like phases of RCSFQC thus creating still more options. Transfer of credit was available to those personnel who changed their status from officer to enlisted or vice versa. The time limit for qualification was removed, however, personnel were strongly encouraged to qualify under provisions of the existing regulation within three years of assignment to the SF unit.

In July 1983 TRADOC Reg 135-5 was again revised.<sup>6</sup> Unlike the major overhaul of the previous version, this edition of the regulation sought only to serve as a minor tune up. To quote from the regulation, "The RCSFQC is a training program closely aligned with the Active Component SFQC, that is designed to allow flexibility and a faster more convenient method of qualifying RCSF personnel".<sup>7</sup> The regulation tightened up prerequisites to include only personnel assigned to RCSF units, be a member of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) or an Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) who was selected for SF training by the US Army Reserve Components Personnel and Administration Center (RCPAC) now designated as the Army Reserve Personnel Center (ARPERCEN).

Resident SFQC had been lengthened to 17 weeks for all officer and enlisted men with the exception of medical personnel who had an additional 19 weeks of resident medical training. The one major change was the inclusion of a new



Phase ID. Phase ID was a 48 hour certification skill test designed by the US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center (USAJFKSWCS). USAJFKSWCS was the new designation for USAIMA. Phase ID was a comprehensive test designed to test the capability of soldiers who already possessed basic skills. Land navigation, patrolling and basic hands-on skills were tested during a heavily stressed 48 hour period. Phase ID was designed for prior service or exceptional soldiers who appeared to possess the capability of passing the test. The rationale for the test was to provide the RC SF group commander the flexibility to move personnel through Phase I who already possessed those skills taught in the first phase. Economies of time and resources would be realized in that one less funded active duty for training (ADT) period would be required and one year of qualification time would be saved. The test was designed to be closely monitored and administered by personnel from the Special Warfare Center at two certified test sites. Presumably, if a soldier could not pass Phase IB instruction, he should not be able to pass the Phase ID test. That this was a National Guard initiative is apparent when one considers the location of the certified test sites: Camp Williams, Utah and Ft. McClellan, Alabama. RC SF group commanders were driven by the fact that MOS qualification percentages had not risen despite all the options available to their soldiers and that they had to take measures to improve their personnel readiness in peacetime because there would be no time after

mobilization. A second thought was that a Phase ID option would give the RC SF commanders an opportunity to shorten the time required to qualify a soldier by one year over a three to four year training cycle. Figure 6 shows how Phase ID was incorporated into the RCSFQC process. A soldier had to either pass the certification test, Phase ID, or successfully complete resident Phase IB. Also, if the soldier had prior service with the right experience and previous schooling, he could be given constructive credit for the preparatory portion of Phase I, that being Phase IA or IC. And so theoretically, in the best case, or worst case depending on the point of view, a soldier could complete Phase I by only passing a 48 hour test. Qualification in a weekend - RC SF had reached the ultimate time compression.

Another small change saw RCSFQC now conforming more with resident SFQC in that Phase I was considered basic skills, Phase II was considered advanced skills and Phase III was considered unconventional warfare skills. Medical personnel training still had no alternative method of qualification but for the first time, increased emphasis was given to SF communicators. Personnel could not begin Phase IIB until they could send and receive ten groups per minute using International Morse Code (IMC). This prerequisite could be met by either units skill testing with the aid of IMC materials, unit equipment and personnel or by completing the eight week advanced international Morse Code course (AIMC) taught at Fort Bragg.

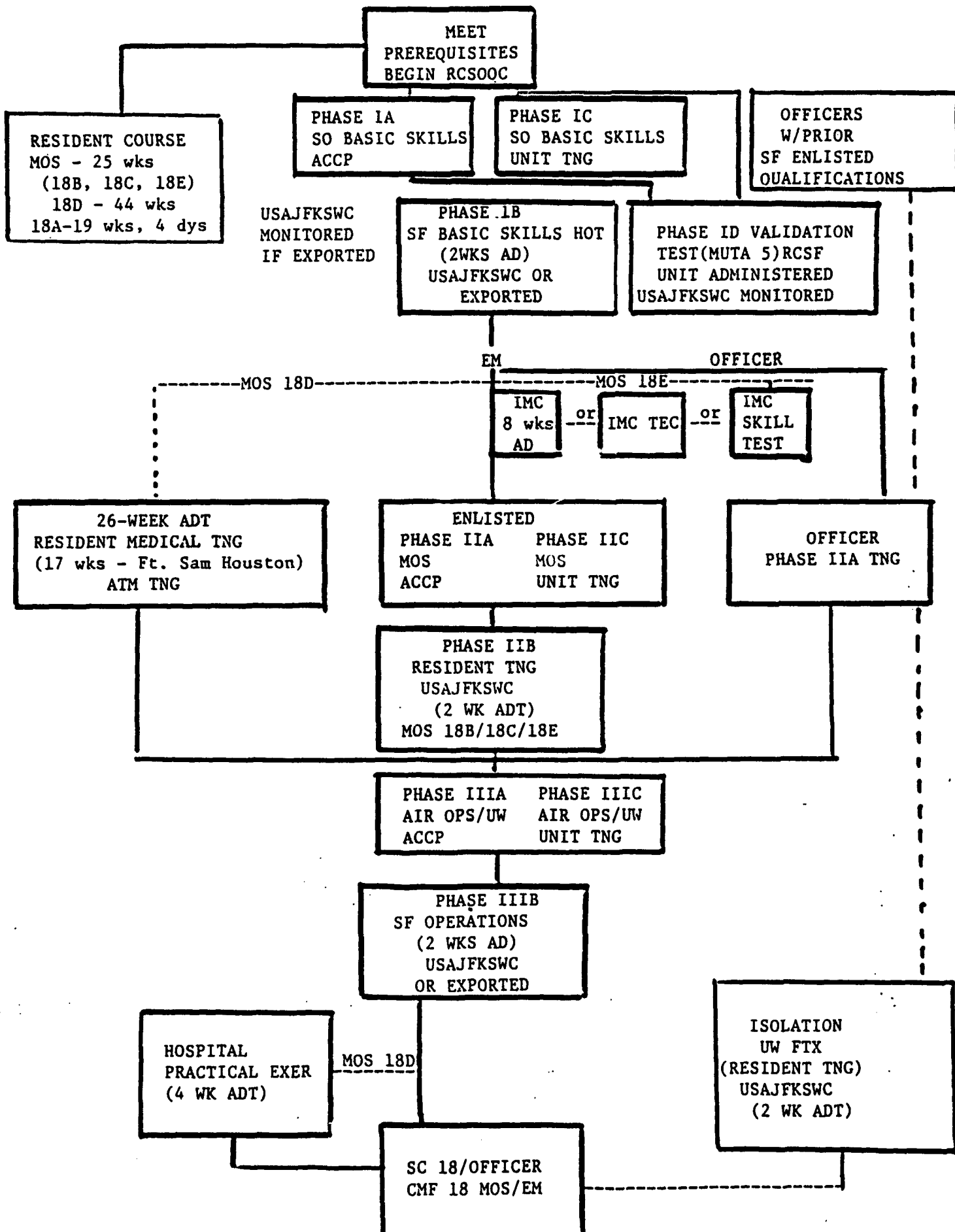


Figure 6 8

In 1984, Skill Code (SC) 18 had been developed for Officer Personnel which replaced ASI "5G" and Career Management Field (CMF) 18 Series MOSs had replaced SQI "S" for the enlisted personnel. Under CMF 18, 18B is the weapons MOS; 18C, engineer MOS; 18D, medical MOS; 18E, communications MOS; 18F, senior NCO MOS and 18Z, sergeant major MOS. Area of Concentration (AOC) 18A would designate a Special Forces officer position. The resident SFQC now consisted of a 19 week course for officer personnel and a 25 week course for enlisted personnel with one exception. Medical training was now 44 weeks long. The SFQC for officer personnel was renamed the Special Operations Detachment Officers Qualification Course (SODOQC). Figure 6 reflects these changes. A four year time limit for qualification was put back into the regulation with a proviso that "every effort should be made to complete RC SF qualifications under provisions of this regulation within three years of enrollment".<sup>9</sup>

On 1 June 1988, the current version of TRADOC Reg 135-5, Army National Guard and Reserve Component (RC) Special Forces (SF) Qualification, was published.<sup>10</sup> By this time Career Field 18 had become a branch for officers and 18A reflected a Special Forces branched officer. This regulation delineated qualification options for fiscal year (FY) 88 and a different set of options for FY 89 and beyond.

In accordance with this iteration of the regulation, the resident SFQC is now 23 weeks long for officers, an increase

of 4 weeks, and also 23 weeks long for enlisted personnel, a decrease of 2 weeks. Medical personnel still undergo 44 weeks of training. All RCSFQCs are now separately named starting with the Reserve Component Special Forces Detachment Officer Course which has been followed by the RC SF Weapons Sergeant QC, the RCSF Engineer Sergeant QC, the RCSF Medical Sergeant QC and the RC SF Communication Sergeant QC. These are phased courses that parallel the resident SFQC as never before. This reduced the number of options available to the RC soldier substantially. See Figures 7 through 9. Of major importance is the increase in the heretofore sacrosanct resident two week phases to three week training periods in Phases 2 and 4 with no options. With a culminating two weeks special operations FTX, this meant, for FY 88, an RC officer must have attended a minimum of nine weeks of resident training, six of which were with USAJFKSWCS at Fort Bragg. It was likewise for the weapons and engineer sergeants. Communications sergeant training was increased by the eight week AIMC. This course was required if the student did not meet the 10/10 minimum send/receive requirement. Medical training was increased by 35 weeks of medical training at Fort Sam Houston and Fort Bragg. For all courses, Phase ID was eliminated. Further, no other phase had an exportable option. For the first time, RCSFQC was fairly cut and dried. The course was six phases -three active duty resident phases and three correspondence phases. As always, the FTX could be conducted by RC SF Groups or USAJFKSWCS. The figures indicate

SPECIAL FORCES DETACHMENT OFFICERS  
SPECIAL FORCES WEAPONS SERGEANTS  
SPECIAL FORCES ENGINEER SERGEANTS

FY 88 (ONLY)

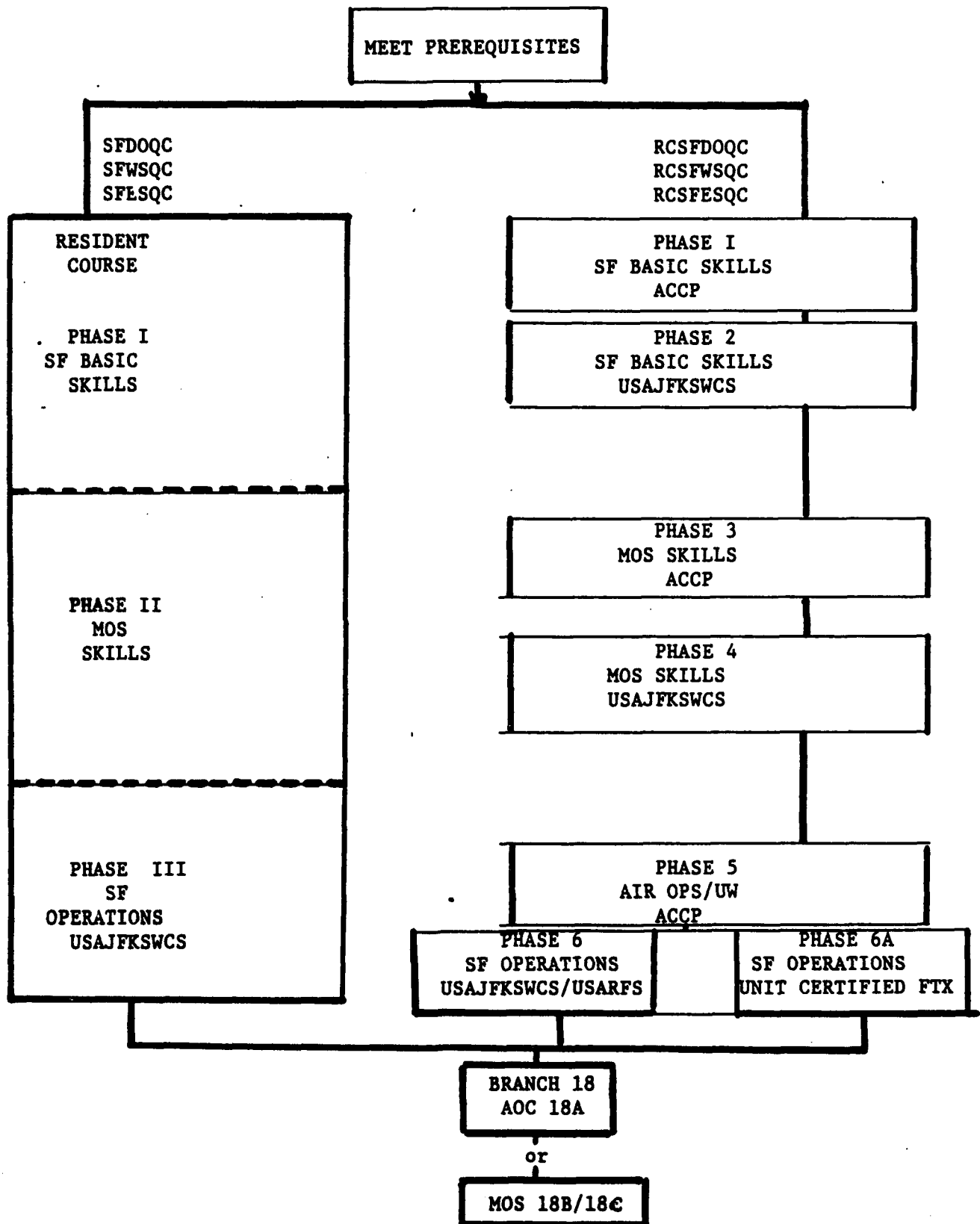


Figure 7<sup>11</sup>

# SPECIAL FORCES MEDICAL SERGEANTS

FY 88 (ONLY)

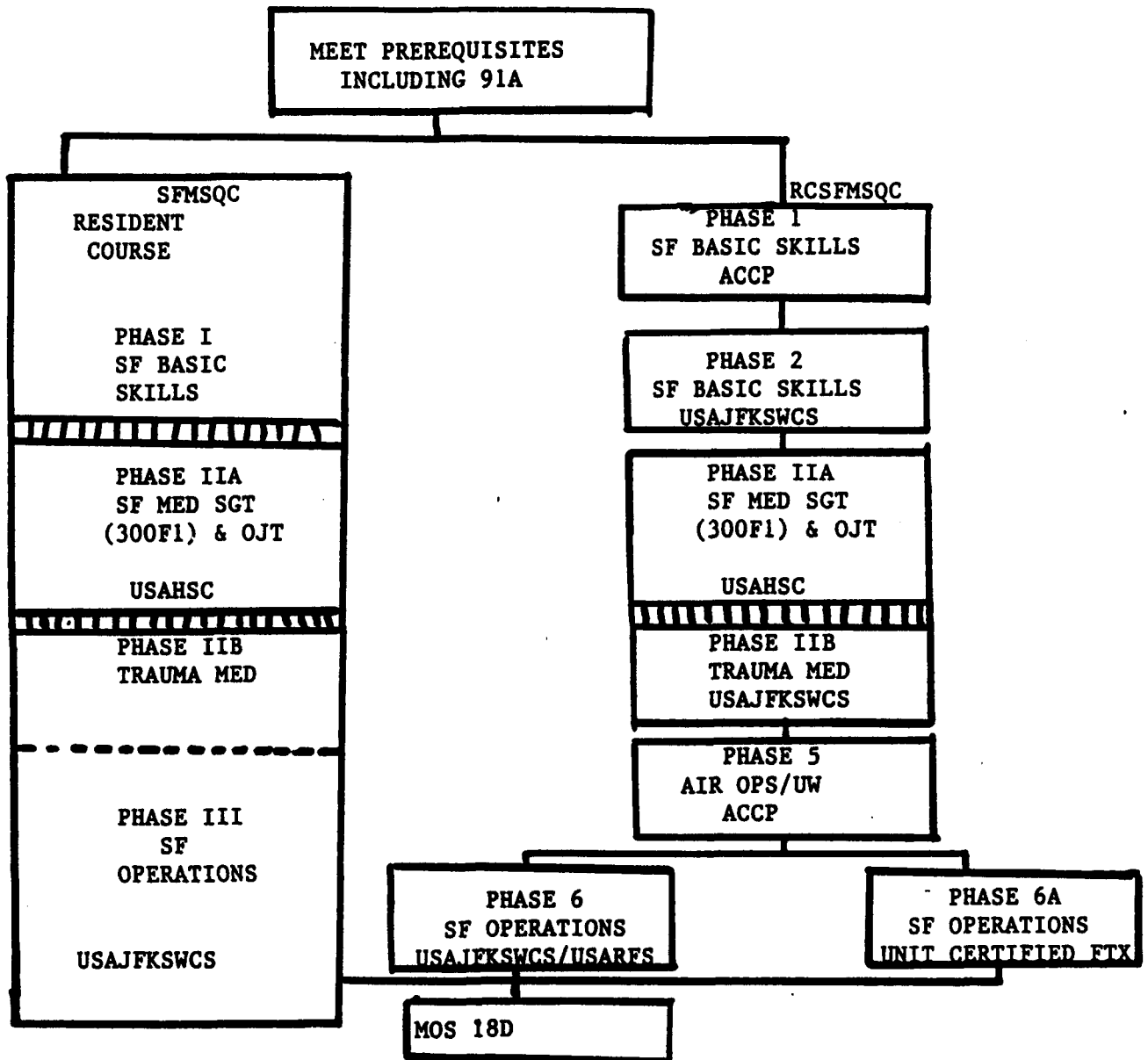


Figure 8<sup>12</sup>

SPECIAL FORCES COMMUNICATIONS SERGEANTS

FY 88 (ONLY)

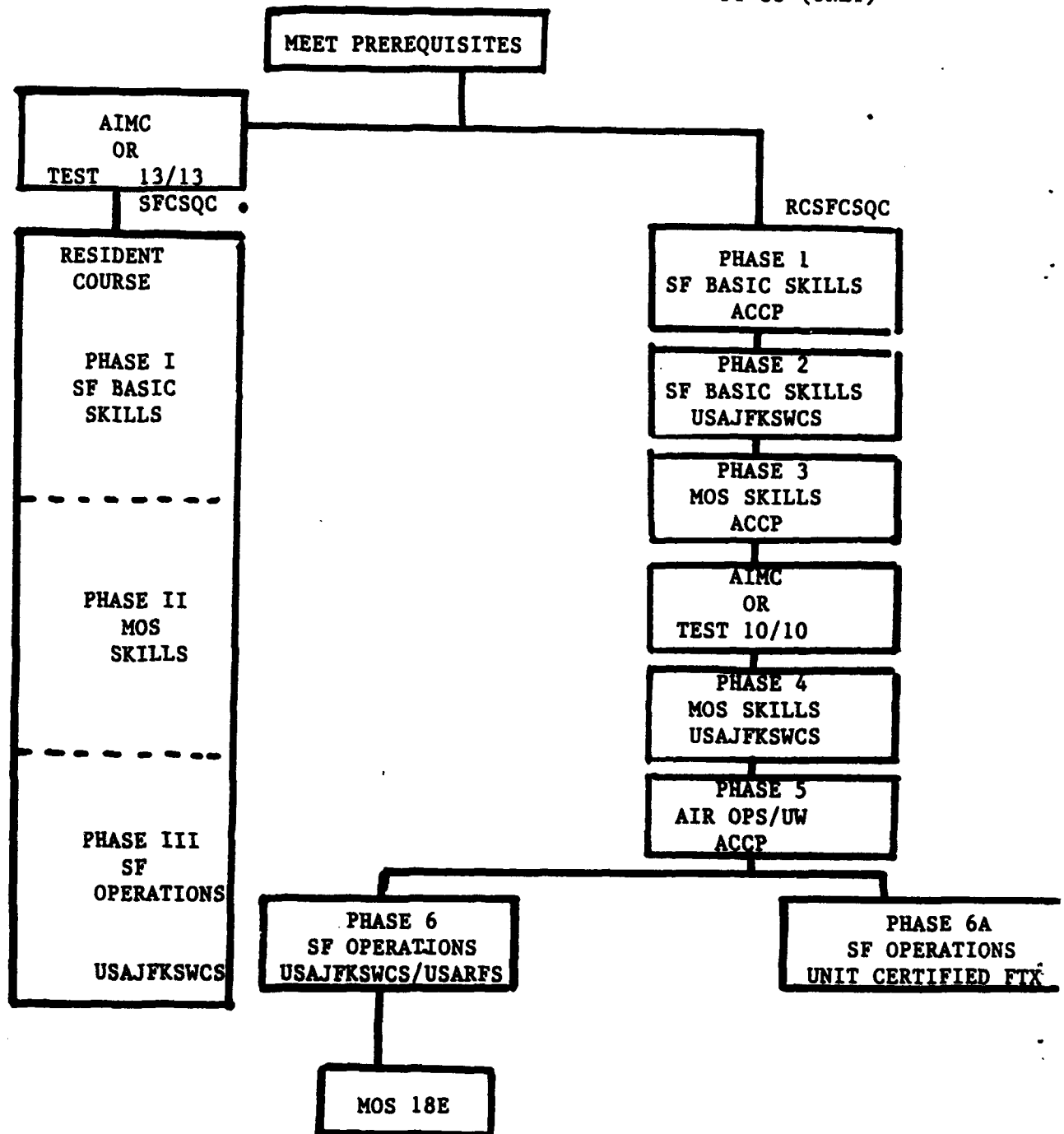


Figure 9<sup>13</sup>



USAR School involvement with the FTX. however, this option was never exercised.

Another major change was the increased emphasis on the NonCommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES). RC soldiers graduating from a resident SFQC received credit for CMF 18 MOS qualification and credit for the CMF 18 Basic NonCommissioned Officer Course (BNCOC). RC soldiers graduating from RCSFQC received credit for CMF 18 MOS qualification and RCBNCOC Phase II to have received full credit for BNCOC, the RCSFQC graduate must then attend the common leader training, RCBNCOC Phase I, taught by USAR schools and ARNG academies.<sup>14</sup>

FY 89 saw the introduction of an entirely new concept. This concept is the Special Forces Orientation and Training (SFOT) course, also known as the Special Forces Assessment and Screening process (SFAS). This is a 3 week course conducted entirely in residence at Fort Bragg. The course is designed to assess officer and enlisted personnel from the AC and RC and to select those qualified to continue with either SFQC or RCSFQC.<sup>15</sup> This program allows Special Forces an opportunity to assess each soldier's trainability by testing his physical, emotional and mental stamina. SFOT also allows each soldier the opportunity to make a meaningful and educated decision as to whether Special Forces fits in his career plans. Successful completion and selection is a prerequisite for attendance at the above named courses. SFOT is a temporary duty (TDY) course and those failing the course

are returned to their units with no adverse comments being made. One of the objectives is to attrit the pool of volunteers before high permanent change of station costs are incurred. The SFOT course is intentionally highly stressful and consequently sees a relatively high attrition rate. RC soldiers failing the course can have the opportunity to return for another attempt once the reason for failure has been rectified. RC soldiers who complete SFOT return to their units to prepare for SFQC or RCSFQC. There is no provision for finishing SFOT on Friday and starting SFQC on Monday. Administrative constraints prevent this plus the human body rest and recovery factor must be taken into account. As SFOT is a radical change to the existing program, it must be "grandfathered". Therefore those RC soldiers who successfully completed an RCSFQC Phase II at USAJFKSWCS prior to 1 Oct 1988 do not have to complete SFOT. All others are required to attend SFOT.

FY 89 also saw the return of some options with the addition of unit training option Phase IA. See Figure 10 to 12. This phase, in conjunction with Phase 1, SF Basic Skills correspondence is designed to parallel RCSFQC Phase 2 and serve as an optional substitute for it. Phase IA is a completely exportable training package for RC use in training SF officers and enlisted personnel during IDT periods.<sup>10</sup> This training may be conducted by RC SF units or by approved USAR schools or ARNG academies. The Phase 6A option to Phase 6 is still available and remains the most favored way of

SPECIAL FORCES DETACHMENT OFFICERS  
SPECIAL FORCES WEAPONS SERGEANTS  
SPECIAL FORCES ENGINEER SERGEANTS

FY 89

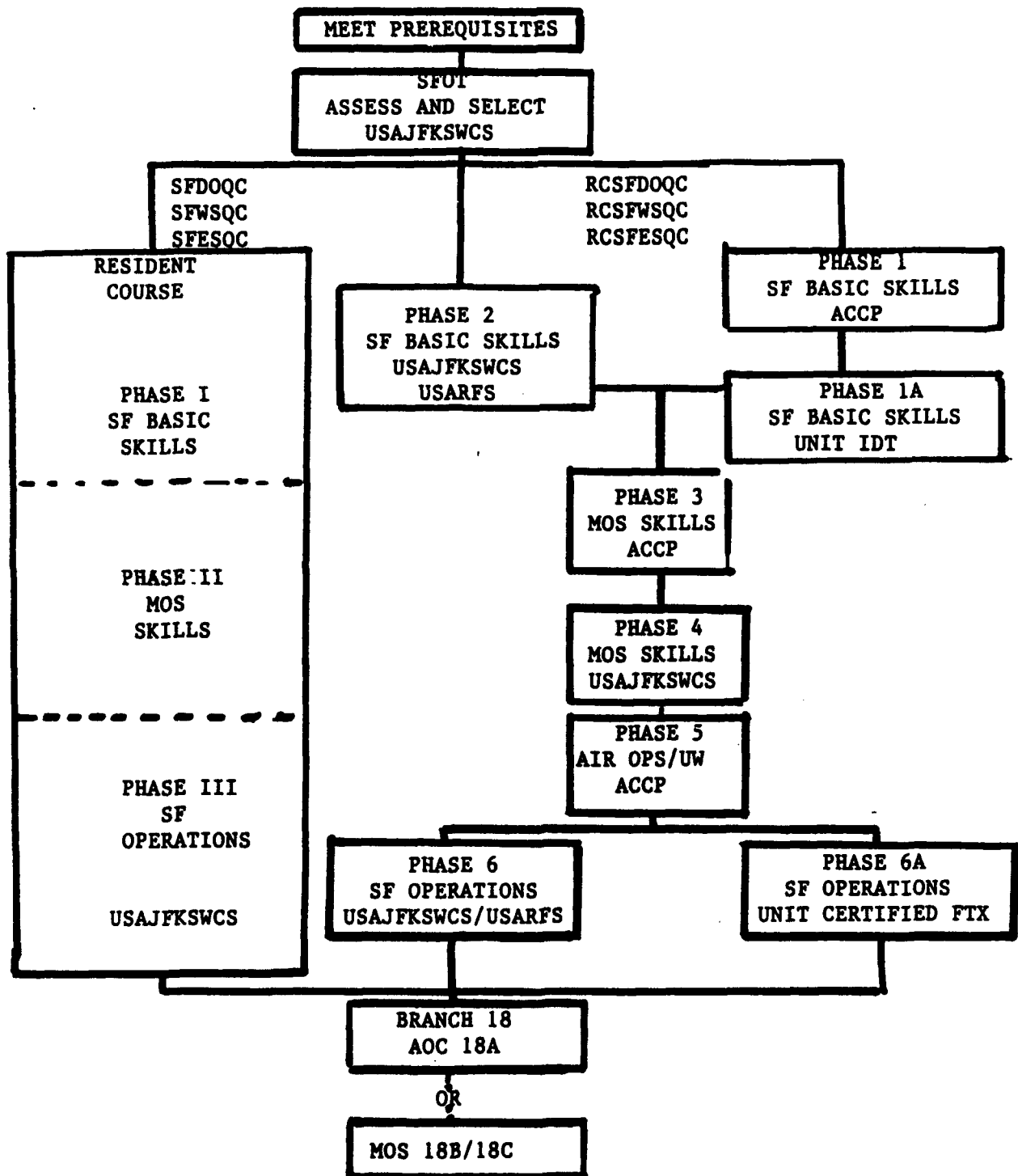


Figure 10<sup>17</sup>

# SPECIAL FORCES MEDICAL SERGEANTS

FY 89

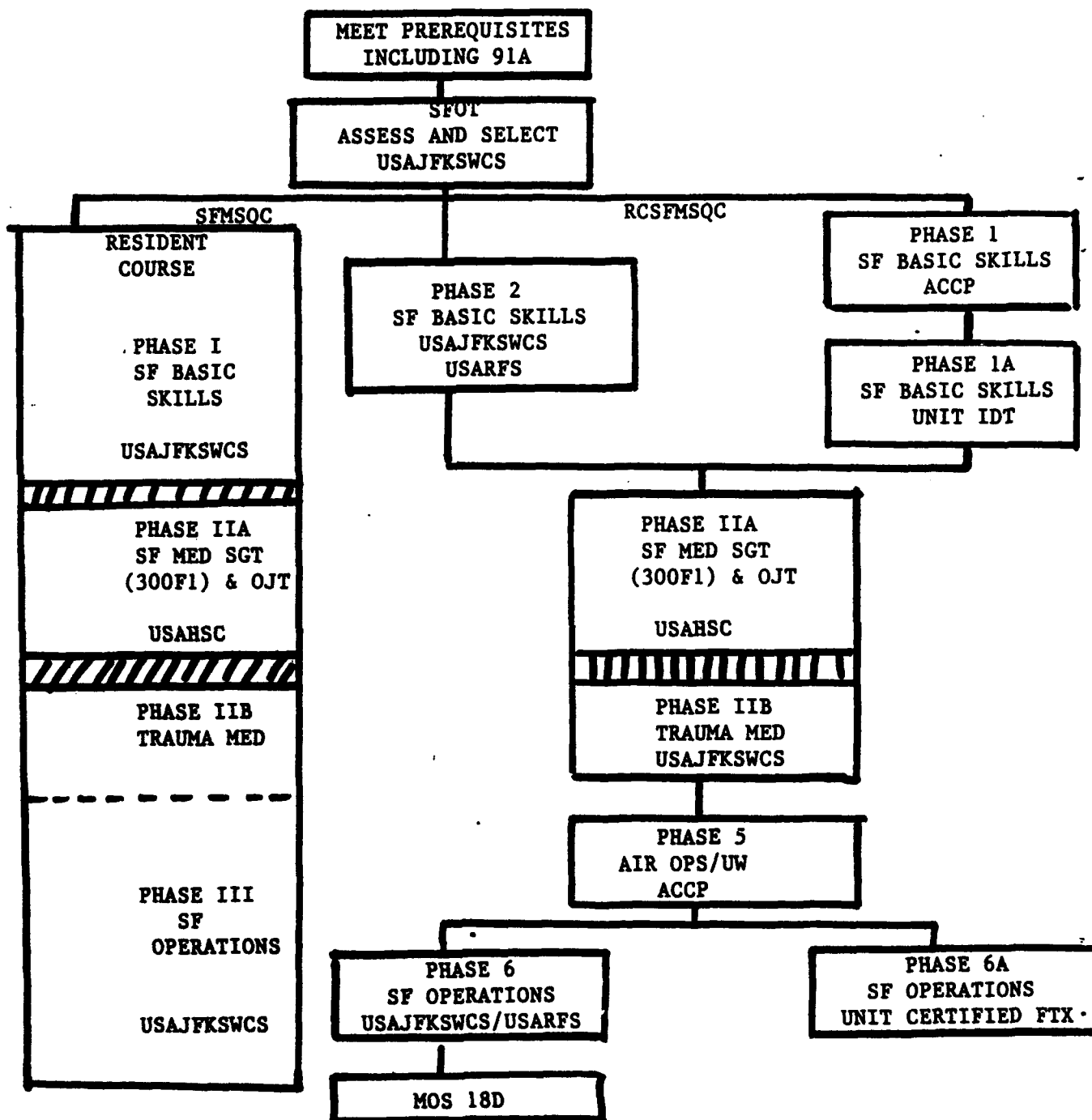


Figure 11<sup>18</sup>

# SPECIAL FORCES COMMUNICATIONS SERGEANTS

FY 89

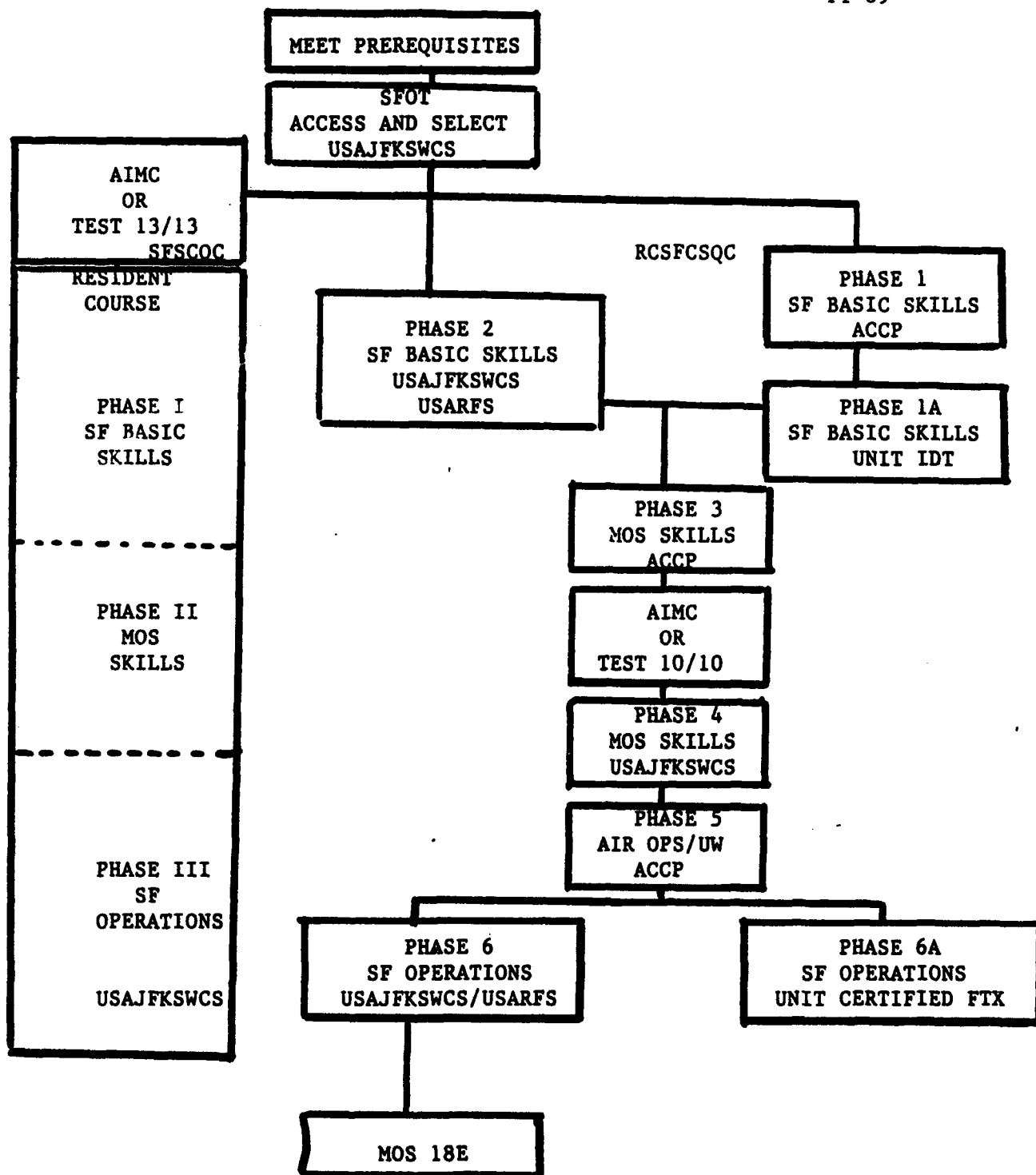


Figure 12<sup>19</sup>

completing Phase 6. To this date, USAR schools and ARNG academies have not been involved in Phase 1A, Phase 2 and Phase 6. To do so would require an inordinate expenditure of manpower, resources, equipment and time. I question the cost effectiveness of this option. One final note involves constructive credit for completion of SF training. Officers with prior enlisted service and who have been awarded a CMF 18 MOS may apply for constructive credit based on their enlisted qualification. These officers will be required to complete the Detachment Officers MOS portion of either the SFDOQC (Phase II) or RCSFFDOQC (Phase 3 and 4). Enlisted members who reverted from officer status and were awarded SC "5G" or AOC 18A may ask for constructive credit based on their commissioned officer qualifications. These personnel will be required to complete the MOS skills portion of one of the SFQCs (Phase II) or one of the RCSFQCs (Phase 3 and 4). Enlisted members who have been awarded a CMF 18 MOS may acquire an additional CMF 18 MOS by completing the MOS skills portion of any other SFQC (Phase II) or RCSFQC (Phase 3 and 4).

With this, the eighties are fast drawing to a close as we have now arrived at the present and have completed a historical review of all regulations which pertained to RCSFQ individual training. We will take a closer look at the results the RCSFQC has attained and whether or not the course is meeting its objectives.

## CHAPTER IV

### ENDNOTES

1. TRADOC Reg 135-5, Reserve Component Special Forces Qualification, 14 August 1981.
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3. Ibid., p. 7.
4. Ibid., pp. 2-3.
5. Ibid., p. 7.
6. TRADOC Reg 135-5, Reserve Component Special Forces Qualification, 6 July 1983.
7. Ibid., p. 8.
8. Ibid., p. unnumbered, Appendix 1.
9. TRADOC Reg 135-5, Reserve Component Special Forces Qualification, 9 April 1984.
10. TRADOC Reg 135-5, Army National Guard and Army Reserve, Reserve Component (RC) Special Forces (SF) Qualification Summary, 1 June 1988.
11. Ibid., pp. B-1 to B-3.
12. Ibid., p. B-4.
13. Ibid., p. B-5.
14. Ibid., p. 4-1.
15. Ibid., p. 3-1.
16. Ibid., p. 3-1.
17. Ibid., pp. C-1 to C-3.
18. Ibid., p. C-4.

CHAPTER IV  
ENDNOTES CONTINUED

19. Ibid., p. C-5.



## CHAPTER V

### RCSFQC - THE PRESENT

In 1970 the SF qualification of the 12 RC SF battalions ranged anywhere from 40% to 60%. In July 1988 the percentages ranged from 57% to 80% with an average percentage of 69%. Granted, the overall percentages had shown improvement over the 20 year period, but the expectations were a great deal more. Why did the shortfalls occur? There were any number of reasons but the major one was the length of the course. What was to be the primary advantage of the course (more years but less time per year) turned out to be the primary shortcoming of the course. History has revealed that the SF groups had to start an incredibly large number of people down the RCSFQC road just to produce a small trickle of SF qualified personnel at the other end of that road. That road was a long and winding one which was filled with numerous obstacles and dead ends that many personnel just could not overcome and, as a result, just gave up and dropped by the wayside as still another partially qualified SF soldier.

There were many factors which lead to this lack of success. Some resulted from an action or an inaction on the part of the soldier. Other factors were beyond the control

of the soldier and could be attributed to his unit or his higher headquarters. Examples of what happened included failure to complete correspondence subcourses in a timely or prescribed manner resulting in either the soldier being dropped from the correspondence program or failing to produce subcourse completion certificates in time to start a resident phase. The net result was the loss of one year. Another example was the failure to satisfactorily complete a resident phase for any one of a number of reasons including physical inadequacies, physical training (PT) failure, swim test failure, medical or academic problems, administrative errors and personal problems just to mention a few. Whether they were the fault of the soldier, his unit, his higher headquarters or, in a few cases, the school itself, is, in retrospect, not important now. What is important was that the net result was again another lost year. At times, what continuity there was in the phased course was lost because of a series of recurring problems. What was designed to be a nice tidy three to four year course just did not work out that way. Resident phases were cancelled because of lack of students. Students were prevented from attending active duty phases because of insufficient quotas caused by funding constraints of their higher headquarters. And finally some reservists, mostly officers, who, for a variety of reasons when restricted to one two-week period of active duty training per year, opted to perform annual training with their units instead of attending RCSFQ training. This could

have been either a voluntary or involuntary choice on the part of the individual. Again, the results were the same: another lost year. Statistics have never been kept, but I surmise that of all the students who completed the RCSFQC, a very small percentage took more than three years. Put another way, of the very large number of soldiers who lost a year or more, very few of them ever completed the course. Discouragement, loss of interest, lack of motivation and dedication or just a plain failure to see the "light at the end of the tunnel" were all reasons attributed to noncompletion.

At this point in time, we should turn our attention to those soldiers who successfully completed RCSFQC. As we have seen, the RCSFQC graduates spent substantially less time in resident training than the SFQC graduates. This was especially true early in the program when officers could qualify by completing a correspondence course and a unit FTX. These officers are now the senior field grade officers associated with reserve Special Forces. Experience aside, there is absolutely no way these officers can be considered as knowledgeable in SF basic techniques as their peers who attended resident SFQC or their subordinates who completed the current RCSFQC with its mandatory four to six week resident training plus an FTX at a minimum. The RCSFQC has made great strides in closing the gap between its counterpart, but it still has a long way to go. While the RCSFQC has increased the minimum resident training time from

zero to six weeks, the resident course has increased from 13 to 26 weeks at a minimum. Obviously, a disparity still exists. Those who notice it most are those soldiers who completed the two versions and then compared course content. Often a first class/second class caste inference is made. Whether intentional or not, the seed of difference has been sown.

Recently, the Army and the Special Forces community realized that the current program of qualifying RC SF soldiers was failing in its mission. When the current situation reached the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) level in 1987, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army (VCSA) established an RC SF MOSQ goal of 80%. Forces Command (FORSCOM) in turn recommended that the goal for all RC MOSs, including the 18-series, be set at 85%, 5% higher than the 18-series alone. The CSA approved this recommendation in August of 1988. The CSA further directed the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations (DCSOPS) to "solve and fix for good" the RC SF MOSQ problem.<sup>1</sup> So the goal of the RC SF units was to obtain 80% SF MOSQ in each CMF 18-series MOSs.

To accomplish this, the current method of producing RC SF soldiers will have to be changed. There are 3,015 officer and enlisted spaces in RC SF units. The 80% goal of SF MOSQ equates to 2,412 positions. As of October 1988, RC SF units had 1,962 spaces or 65% filled with SF qualified soldiers leaving these units 450 qualified personnel short of the 80% goal. In October, there were 871 soldiers in training or

scheduled to attend training. With an anticipated 33% success rate based on FY 87 and 88 historical data, 289 RC SFQC graduates are projected. But one must also consider that the annual turnover rate of SF qualified personnel from SF units is 12% or 289 soldiers. 287 soldiers in and 287 soldiers out means that RC SF is just holding its own.<sup>2</sup>

In FY 87, 136 out of 215 total RC SF graduates attended SFQC. The remaining 69 graduates came from RCSFQC, Phase 6. This is a two thirds/one third ratio. This ratio became even more skewed in FY 88 as indicated by the 80%/20% ratio. Even more disturbing is the rate of failure in the two programs. There has been a 25% failure rate in the RCSFQC for engineer sergeants compared to a 5% failure rate for engineer sergeants in SFQC. Also, there has been a 30% failure rate in the RCSFQC for communication sergeants compared to an 8% failure rate in SFQC.<sup>3</sup> There are two basic reasons which help to explain this phenomenon. First, a subcourse hour of instruction has never equated and never will equate to an hour of resident instruction. Human nature and the multiple choice design of subcourse examinations dictate that most soldiers never study subcourses. They simply fulfill the requirement by turning to the examination and then looking up the answers to the questions. Put another way, soldiers met the requirements by passing the tests and not by learning the material. Soldiers then attend a resident phase poorly prepared for the instruction and ultimately wash out at a higher rate. A second reason is the high incidence of skill

and knowledge erosion. Assuming that the soldier takes the correspondence course seriously and dutifully applies himself to learning the material, the soldier then awaits a start date for the resident phase while failing to realize that for every day or week or month that he is sitting there, his newly acquired skills are diminishing. Only when he attends resident training does he realize how much he forgot.

This is further exacerbated by the fact that all SF resident instruction is taught at skill level 3. This assumes a knowledge of skill levels 1 and 2. Many of the RC attendees have just completed 12 weeks of basic and advanced individual training only and just can not keep up with their E-5 and above active duty counterparts. SFQC is an accredited basic NCO course (BNCOC) and AR 614-200 establishes completion of primary leader training as a prerequisite for attending BNCOC, ie, SFQC. So far the RC has not enforced the requirement to attend a Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC). This would provide the basic leadership training necessary to successfully complete SFOT and SFQC.

Our historical review has covered a 23 year period and has brought us to the advent of a new decade. TRADOC Reg 135-5 is under revision yet again. The fact that it is, implies that the RCSFQC has not yet reached the point where everyone, USAJFKSWCS, RC SF units and reserve soldier is satisfied with the end product. But where do we go from here and has the program met its objectives? Has the system

allowed the RC to get the job done without diluting the end product? Has the readiness posture of the RC GF unit shown any improvement over the past 22 years?

## CHAPTER V

### ENDNOTES

1. HQS, USAJFKSWCS, Reserve Component Special Forces Military Occupational Specialty Qualification Task Force (RC SF MOSQ TF) Briefing, 12 January 1989.
2. Ibid.
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## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS

The previous discussion has lead us to the point of now making conclusions regarding the success or lack of success of the RCSFQC. The following points are enumerated below:

1. The RCSFQC graduate does not measure up to, in many cases, the SFQC graduate because the training is not of equal quality.
2. RCSFQC has a significantly higher failure rate than SFQC.
3. Indications are that the RC SF leadership and the prospective students themselves are recognizing the above two points by the two facts that they are consistently exceeding quota projections for SFQC and allowing RCSFQC quotas to go unfilled.
4. The RCSFQC has not produced the anticipated numbers of qualified personnel necessary to fill all TO&E positions in RC units.

In essence then, the RCSFQC has failed to produce both the quality and quantity of RC SF soldiers it was expected to produce and is consequently being used less frequently. This brings us to the final chapter of this study, that being the future of RCSFQC and recommended alternatives.

## CHAPTER VII

### RECOMMENDATIONS - THE FUTURE OF THE RCSFQC

In view of all previous discussions, I recommend that the RCSFQC program be terminated as of October 1989. Because of the phasing aspects of the RCSFQC, all enrollees who have completed Phase 2 would be given two years to complete a phased program. Accordingly, USAJFKSWCS would conduct Phases 4 and 6 during FY 90 and finally would conduct Phase 6 only in FY 91. RCSFQC would end by August 1992. The obvious result would be that all RC soldiers would have to attend SFQC to become SF qualified. This result would not conflict with existing trends. In FY 87, 74% of the new students elected to attend SFQC rather than RCSFQC Phase 2. In FY 88, this figure rose to 82%. Even if the new student percentage remains stationery, contrary to all indications that it will continue to rise, the effect of dropping RCSFQC will be felt by less than 18% of the potential new students. At least one RC SF group commander is inadvertently supporting this recommendation by requiring his unqualified soldiers to attend SFQC.

Deletion of the RCSFQC would eliminate all future discussion of differences between the two courses and of differences between graduates of the two courses. The " One

SF" concept would be in effect. All RC soldiers would be required to attend a three week SFOT course and a 23 week (at least) SFQC. Additionally, all RC SF students who had only received 12 weeks of basic and advanced individual training (Rep 63s) would be required to attend a PLDC as a prerequisite for attending SFQC. This effort will reduce the number of SFQC failures.

Some secondary benefits will also be derived from eliminating the RCSFQC. RC SF units would not only see an increase in the quality of their SF MOSQ, but also would see an increase in the level of NCOES. USAJFKSWCS would also benefit from a reduction in resources required to conduct multiple qualification courses conducted several times during the year. Instructor personnel, training areas and other training resources would be available for additional SFQCs.

It is arguably assumed that the elimination of the RCSFQC would result in a quality improvement. But quality is only half the problem or dilemma. The other half is the quantity problem. We have seen that mathematically the elimination of RCSFQC will result in reduction, worse case, of less than 18% of attendees. But even if the loss of the RCSFQC results in no reduction in attendees, RC SF still has a problem of substantially increasing the number of new starts and graduates.

This problem is now a recruiting problem and not a training problem.<sup>2</sup> Increased recruiting efforts will result in a better selection of potential RC SF soldiers. One way

to accomplish this is through the improved use of the AC In Service Recruiter (ISR). Previously the ISR assigned active duty personnel to reserve units by matching the first three digits of an MOS with a unit vacancy at a particular location. The new reservist would show up on the door step of the unit and upon finding out about the airborne requirement would then beat a hasty retreat. The unit then had to process his reassignment to a unit of his liking or to the IRR. If the ISRs, especially the ones on posts with airborne and/or SF units assigned, would become more familiar with the locations of RC SF units, they could do a better job of responding to RC SF unit vacancies with a more knowledgeable presentation to those personnel leaving active duty. Personnel leaving active duty from, for example, the 82nd Airborne Division could be informed of RC SF unit vacancies, be assigned to that unit and attend SFOT and SFQC before departing Fort Bragg.

Another effort would assign SF qualified recruiters to the US Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) with a specific mission to recruit for RC SF units. These recruiters could explain the unique aspects of SF training and the commitment requirement to potential enlistees before assignment to an RC SF unit, thus eliminating most "second thought" terminations after resources had been committed or expended for BCT, AIT and the Basic Airborne Course (BAC). SF qualified recruiters would be trained to seek those individuals who appeared to possess the requisite physical,

mental and emotional attributes, maturity and the ability to mix a civilian career with an RC SF career. The SF recruiter would have SF quotas in addition to other recruiting goals. The net result of these two efforts would be to provide better assistance to the SF and non SF soldier leaving active duty who wants to continue with a challenging reserve career and to provide better up front guidance to non prior service personnel who also aspire to a challenging reserve career.

In summation, the RCSFQC can and should be eliminated. If eliminated, quality improvement will at once be realized. Quantity improvements will come in time through a much higher percentage of graduation without the expense of more students and will result from reformed and rededicated recruiting efforts.

## CHAPTER VII

### ENDNOTES

1. Amundsen, James, MAJ, Chief Non Resident Instruction, HQ3 USAJFKSWCS, Personal Interview. Fort Bragg, N. C.: 14 February 1989.
2. Hutchison, George, COL, Senior Reserve Advisor, HQ3, USAJFKSWCS, Personal Interview. Fort Bragg, N.C.: 14 February 1989.

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13. RC SF MOSQ Task Force Briefing, HQS, USAJFKSWCS, 12 January 1989.
14. RC SFQC Briefing, HQS, USAJFKSWCS, 13 February 1989.